

WHY IRISHMEN SHOULD VOTE FOR PROTECTION.

From the Chicago Bureau.

Of all the anomalies of American politics the most strange is the blank stupidity with which nine-tenths of the Irish voters in America vote for the party of British free trade. If there is any man on earth the lessons of whose national history ought to make him a protectionist, it is the Irishman. He has been exported to this country a pauper, a thing it was the interest of his own country to get rid of, because the manufacturers of Ireland had been ruined by British free trade. This fact is all there is of Irish suffering and English oppression. This is the cause. All the rest is consequence. And yet nine Irishmen in ten have heretofore voted for that policy of subservience to England which has been steadily advocated and practiced by the Democratic party, and which would bring the same ruin on this country as it has brought upon Ireland.

British free trade, relative to Ireland, means—as it does relative to all other countries—Englishmen's profits. It is not a principle of political economy, but a subterfuge of a nation of plunderers. Sometimes it assumes the form of prohibiting trade between Ireland and the colonies; sometimes of prohibiting associations from forming among Irishmen for manufacturing purposes; sometimes of removing Irish duties on manufactures so as to let in English manufactures free; and sometimes of removing the tariff on breadstuffs, so as, after turning Ireland over to agriculture, to destroy its agriculture. But in all cases there is one object, viz., to sell English goods in Irish markets regardless of the effect it may have to destroy first, Irish manufactures and ultimately Irish agriculture.

As early as 1688, the government of William and Mary, in reply to a petition of London merchants, pledged itself to "discourage" the woollen manufactures of Ireland, which were then rapidly advancing, so as to compel Irish wool growers to send the raw wool to England and buy back their cloths. The export of wool to foreign countries being prohibited, the Irish wool grower was required to sell his wool to English cloth makers. Irish ships were excluded from all benefit of the navigation laws, and excluded from the fisheries. English ships and English fishermen had free trade and special privileges. But while England took the turkey she gave Irishmen the crow, every time. Sugar could be imported only through England, and as no draw back was allowed on its exportation to Ireland, the latter was taxed for the support of the English government while maintaining its own. All trade with the colonies must be done by English ships and through English ports, thus prohibiting Ireland from building up a commerce in manufactures, ports of entry, or a commercial marine. To induce them to confine themselves to raising wool, hemp, and flax, for English looms, these were admitted into England free of duty.

During the American Revolution Irishmen asserted the rights of their country to legislative independence, and the embarrassments of England were such that she complied for the time with their demand. In 1783 duties were imposed on articles of foreign manufacture with the avowed purpose of employing the surplus labor of the Irish people in converting cotton, wool, and pork into cloth. Commerce made rapid strides. The linen, silk, and book manufactures flourished—more books being published in Dublin by a single house than are now used by the whole population of Ireland. With 1801, however, the English copyright laws were extended to Ireland, and with free trade in English books, Ireland began to cease to either make, buy, or read books. Under the act of Union the almost prohibitory duties on English calicoes and muslins were to continue until 1808; those on English woollens were to last until 1821; those on cottons until 1810; and by extension of the English patent laws over Ireland, a prohibition on the erection of new forms of machinery was imposed, unless tribute was paid to their English inventors, thus accompanying free trade in commodities by an embargo on the ideas and inventions which would promote their production. As a sample of the results, Dublin, which, in 1800, had ninety-one woollen manufactories, in 1840, when, according to the natural law of increase, it ought to have two hundred and fifty, only had twelve. The hands employed, instead of increasing from four thousand nine hundred and eighty in 1800 to ten thousand, or twice as many, in the forty years, were reduced to six hundred and two. The wool-combers and carpet manufacturers had nearly disappeared. The same results had ensued in Cork, Kilkenny, and Wicklow. Branches of manufactures in which the employees were counted by thousands numbered only a few scores.

At first the whole population being driven into agriculture, land became the only means of living, and rose to rents of six, eight, and ten pounds per acre. Enormous rents, low wages, farms of an enormous extent, let by rapacious and indolent proprietors to a class of pauperizing laborers to be re-let by intermediate oppressors, for five times their value, among the wretched starvers on potatoes and water. This led to insurrections, coercion acts, and speedily to famine, and the exportation of the people as a surplus commodity. Manufactures did not fail in Ireland for want of coal, for that was abundant, both anthracite and bituminous; nor for want of capital, for capital was being depreciated and wasted every year equal to that then invested in all the cotton and woollen machinery in England; nor for want of industry, for with proper returns for his labor the Irish laborer is as vigorous and industrious as any in the world, and has more power than the English, French, or Belgian. It was not for want of iron, for Ireland had all the materials for making it in the greatest profusion. It was not for want of excess of population, for the population was far less dense than in Belgium; and so far from crowding the land, millions of acres of the best land in Ireland were, and still are, unclaimed and uncultivated. County Mayo has an area of 1,364,000 acres, of which 800,000 are waste, 470,000 acres of which are claimed to be reclaimable. Counties Galway, Kerry, and others have a like proportion of unutilized land. Had manufacturing towns been developed near these lands, so that the tillers of the soil could find a market for all they would produce, they could have been reclaimed at an immediate profit. But the poor are compelled to work for immediate profits, however small, and to forego remote profits, however great. Under the injudicious system of agriculture which Irish farmers were obliged to pursue when all their markets were across the channel the soil declined rapidly in fertility. Had the markets been near, the Irish farmers, having their choice among a hundred crops—roots, grains, grasses, fruits, berries, live stock, poultry, eggs, butter, cheese, etc.—could have practiced rotation of crops, and of manures, and so cropped their lands twice

a year without exhausting their soils at all, but, on the contrary, improving them constantly. With distant markets, however, they were limited to few crops, which would not pay for manuring, and did exhaust the soil. The potato especially is one of those crops which, when planted without rotation on the same soil, extracts from the soil speedily every particle of capacity it contains for growing the potato. The weakness of the plant, caused by continuous cropping, showed itself in the potato rot, and this resulted in the Great Famine. The famine of 1846, '47, '48, and '49 is thus clearly traceable to the removal of the tariff barriers erected for the defense of Irish industry against English encroachment, which removal began in 1808, was consummated in 1821, and made still worse by the removal of all tariff on foreign corn and food in 1846. In the decade in which British free trade developed its full results the people of Ireland perished of hunger by thousands, and the population, in 1850, was one million six hundred and fifty thousand less than in 1810. In Galway Union alone four thousand families, and twenty thousand human beings, were upon the land, homeless and homeless within the two years. A writer in the *Irish Journal* says:—

"Some parts of the country appeared like an enormous graveyard; the numerous graves of the unfortunates seemed to be gigantic landmarks. They were indeed records of decay and death far more melancholy than the grave can show. Looking on them one would arise in one's mind, 'Am I in a civilized country? Have we really been civilized? Can such scenes be paralleled in Siberia or Caffraria?'"

For a time the Irish were allowed to flow into the cities, and over into England. But at length the wretchedness they everywhere carried with them, and their tendency to reduce the wages of Englishmen below the living point, caused a cry to go up from the cities, and from all parts of England, for a poor law to compel the Irish countrymen to maintain their own paupers. Such a law was passed to thrust back the starving Irish on the heartless agents of their absent landlords. For however the *laissez faire* school of politicians may advocate letting industry alone (as if any such thing as letting industry alone, and at the same time taxing it, were possible), yet when the failure of a government to protect its industry reduces its people to paupers, they can then no longer apply the "let alone" doctrine. But if a government is bound to prevent starvation, it is not bound to do so in the cheapest and best way, by protecting industry before it totters to its fall, while the arm of the worker is strong, his eye undimmed by hunger, and his natural force unabated? "A stitch in time saves nine," and a little effective wisdom, while industries are in operation, is worth more to prevent the suffering of the working classes than millions spent after a nation's industries are destroyed. The sole function of government is to protect—what? Life, liberty, and property. "But," said Napoleon, "formerly they had a property called land. Now we have a new kind of property—industry." Shylock says:—"You take my life when you do take the means whereby I live." So government protects life, liberty, and property, all in one, most effectually when it protects industry.

Though the excessive rents of agricultural lands followed the turning of the manufacturing population of Ireland over to agriculture, yet, as a whole, it cannot be said that the high price of land in Ireland was a cause of its depopulation. On the contrary, the same causes which depopulated the inland reduced the value of the land to a level with that in the counties which are newest and most distant from markets. In a paper read before the British Association it was shown that the Irish estates owned by English capital, embracing 403,065 acres, had been purchased at an average value of £2 15s., or \$13 20 per acre, being about the price paid for unbroken prairie in Illinois, Iowa, and Minnesota. Captain Head, in a work on Ireland, tells us of an estate of ten thousand acres, purchased at five cents an acre.

Between 1841 and 1851, the houses of the fourth class decreased from 491,278 to 135,589, showing that in ten years over 350,000 humble houses had been razed to the ground, and converted into deer parks, pastures, and waste. Notwithstanding the flood of emigration to America, the total number of paupers who came upon the government for support was, in 1848, 2,043,505; in 1849, 2,142,766; in 1850, 1,174,267; in 1851, 755,347; in 1852, 519,775; in 1853, 409,688; in 1854, 319,616; in 1855, 305,220; in 1857, 190,851, and in 1858, 188,050. Again, we say this abominable condition of depopulation and destitution, crowding the land, for in the Barony of Enniscorthy, for instance, there were 230,000 acres of land to only 5000 paupers, or 230 acres to every head of a family. Why, then, could they not live? Simply because free foreign importations had destroyed their manufactures, while furnishing them no market for their crops. For this miserable policy of misgovernment the people lay on their backs by the hundred thousand, without food or work, "for the hunger," because they had discovered that a starving man could live longer lying down than standing up.

And yet nineteenth-century Ireland, which escaped from these sufferings to become free and sovereign voters of the United States would march to the polls in solid phalanx and vote for free trade, with all its tendencies to bring America into the same condition as Ireland then was. Who talks of the wisdom of the collective people? Nothing is so densely ignorant as the ignorance that moves in masses, and sustains itself by numbers! We talk frankly to the Irish people, because we despise all demagogues, and because they, in the past, have been specially subject to it. When we see an Irishman talk, write, or vote for British free trade, we feel an innate tendency to collar him, and shove him back under its influence, saying:—"There, if you like British free trade so well, stay in Ireland, where you can keep your hungry belly full of it—as of the east wind."

We call upon the Irishmen of America to redeem themselves from the foul disgrace of voting as the tools of their English oppressors in America. Every vote for protection to American industry is a vote for the redemption of Ireland. As England's manufacturing supremacy was, and is, supported by Ireland of the United States, her hold upon Ireland will be released until at last Ireland, like Australia and Canada, will be permitted to legislate for herself in a Dublin parliament. When she is so permitted she will, like Canada and Australia, legislate for the protection of her industries, manufactures, farms, fisheries, and ships. The value of her land and labor will rise, and that of her food and clothing will fall, until her cry will no longer be:—

"O God, that bread should be so dear, And flesh and blood so cheap!"

Let Irishmen then no longer basely and blindly vote in America for a policy that has ruined Ireland. Rather let them vote for one that will develop both the value of man in both, and in so doing render both more free, because more self-sustaining and wealth-producing.

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A FINE SUGAR PLANTATION FOR SALE.

Situated in the State of Louisiana, parish of Plaquemine, at about thirty-five miles below the city of New Orleans, on the left bank of the river Mississippi. Having a front of about thirty-six acres on said river, by a depth of about thirty-seven acres, making a superficies of thirteen hundred and twenty-three acres, about four hundred acres of which are under culture, the greater portion planted with sugar-cane. A sufficient quantity of seed-cane will be reserved to plant about one hundred acres next season. With all necessary buildings, including a fine dwelling-house, sugar-house, with steam sugar-mill, and the Rillieux apparatus, all complete, and in actual use, laborers' quarters, stables, etc. This plantation is susceptible of making three to four hundred hogsheads of sugar next year, and the crop can easily be raised to six hundred hogsheads, and even more.

Titles indisputable. This fine property will be sold low, to close a concern.

For further particulars apply to E. L. MOSS, No. 206 WALNUT Street, Philadelphia.

FOR SALE—A VERY VALUABLE HOUSE AND LOT at the N. W. corner of Forty-second and Kingessing Avenue. House built of brown stone, three stories, containing 16 rooms, and finished in the best and most substantial manner, with all the modern improvements. One of the most desirable houses in West Philadelphia. Property should be seen to be appreciated. Persons wishing to know the terms and examine the property can do so by calling on JAMES M. SEILERS, until 3 P. M., at No. 144 S. SIXTH Street, and in the evening at No. 600 S. FORTY-SECOND Street.

TO LET, a large Building, suitable for manufacturing purposes, on EIGHTH Street, above Noble. No. 211 South FIFTH Street. 9 20 12

FOR SALE OR TO LET—Nos. 2106, 2108, 2110, 2112 and 2114 WALNUT Street. Prices ranging from \$22,000 to \$25,000, or will be rented. Address, S. C. BUNTING, JR., No. 215 1/2 Walnut Street. 9 20 12

TO RENT—THE STORE No. 722 CHESTNUT Street. Apply on the premises between 10 and 12 o'clock A. M. 8 17 11

FOR RENT—A MODERN DWELLING, No. 280 CHESTNUT Street, West Philadelphia. Cheap; immediate possession. No. 1406 ELLIS WORTH Street; eleven rooms; saloon parlor, in complete repair, newly painted and papered throughout, new tin roof, gas, bath, hot and cold water, heating apparatus, good yard. Apply No. 120 S. SEVENTH Street. 9 29 6

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